THE Dangerous *Impoſture* OF QUAKERISM, REPRESENTED IN A Letter to a Friend: With A Brief DISCOURSE CONCERNING The True *Nature* and Pernicious *Conſequences* of *Canting* about RELIGION.

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By the ſame Author.

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THE Dangerous *Impoſture* OF QUAKERISM,

Repreſented in a Letter to a Friend.

SIR,

HAVING lately read *George Fox*'s *Journal*, I ſend you the Obſervations I made concerning *The Dangerous Impoſture of Quakeriſm*: And that which I am to acquaint you with upon this Subject, may be divided into what relates to its *Real Author* and *Doctrine*, or to its pretended *Original* and *Proof*.

I. The *Real Author* of this *Impoſture* was *George Fox*; and 'tis worth our taking Notice of, what his true Character was. He was, when he began to publiſh his Doctrine, a *Young Man*, who had had a Religious Education, and in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Years of his Age, was exerciſed with ſtrong Temptations to *Deſpair*, and was under great Troubles and Diſorders of Mind on that account, ſuch as could not be removed by thoſe Miniſters that he had recourſe unto.

Upon this, he betook himſelf to Retirement and *Solitude*, Night and Day, to much Faſting, Reſervedneſs, and Melancholy, and eſtranging himſelf from Society,

went alone into *Solitary Places* with his Bible, and his own Thoughts.

By degrees, he imagined that God made known his Will to him; and *opened to him* (as his Phraſe is) that *the Light of Chriſt within Man*, was to be his Inſtructor and Guide in Matters of Religion. And through this Imagination, he ſometimes gain'd Comfort and Joy; and by degrees arrived at extreme Preſumption and Confidence.

When he affirmed, That *Chriſt* was in *him*, he did not mean that the *Man Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was in him; but that the ſame Divinity that is called the *Word* and the *Light*, (*John* 1. 1---7---13.) which was in *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, was alſo (though not in the ſame meaſure) in *George Fox*. But the *Word* and the *Light* is the ſame Divinity, as all Orthodox Chriſtians mean by the *Second Perſon in the Bleſſed Trinity*, (1 *John* 5. 7.) His *Fundamental* Doctrine then was this, That the Second Perſon in the Bleſſed Trinity, dwells as truly in every *Quaker*, though not as much as he did in *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*. But although the Third Perſon in the Trinity, *viz.* the *Holy Ghoſt* dwells in other Men, yet the *Word* or *Son* (*i. e.* the Second Perſon in the Trinity) never did dwell in any Man, but in the Man *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* only, who was the *Chriſt of God*, as in him the Word was made Fleſh, (*John* 1. 14.) or the Son of God was Incarnate, and who is over all, God bleſſed for ever, (*Rom.* 9. 5.)

But, for *George Fox* to affirm, that *Chriſt* was *in him*, is an exceſs of Error and Profaneneſs, ſuch as no ſober Chriſtian, who knows, that by this his Bleſſed Saviour is *diſtinguiſhed* from, and *exalted* above the higheſt Angels, can endure to hear without the utmoſt Abhorrence and Abomination.

This is the *Fundamental Error* and *Prodigious Deluſion* that the Author of *Quakeriſm* entertain'd and ſet up in the World, and this his Followers defend and maintain to this day.

When he communicated his Notions to others, and at their *Convincement* (as he ſpeaks) great *Horror and Trembling* fell upon them; Inſomuch, that ſome of the Com-

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pany affirm'd, that not only the Persons, but also the *Church* it self (in which they sometimes were) did *shake*, and they were afraid it should fall upon their Heads.

The *Extravagancy* of the Discourses and Actions of this Person, is manifest in his Life. Upon the consideration of which, together with the preternatural Effects his Addresses had upon his Converts, I made these *Questions*, (1.) Whether there were fuller evidence that *Oliver's Porter* in *Bedlam* was a Madman, than that *George Fox* was so? And (2.) Whether (setting aside the Testimony of the Evangelists, who say that *Demoniacks* were brought to our Saviour to be cured) it be more manifest from their Words and Actions, that those Persons were possessed with the Devil, than that *George Fox*, and other *Primitive Quakers*, were such possess'd Persons?

Now, every one knows that a *Quaker* receives the absurd Doctrines, and imitates the melancholy behaviour of *George Fox*, who was the real *Author*, and the Original *Pattern* of this Religious Madness.

II. The *Doctrines* of *Quakerism* may be distinguished into what is *Pernicious*, and what is *Trifling*.

First, The *Pernicious* Doctrines of *Quakerism* are so, with respect to *Human Society*, or to *Christian Religion*.

1. The Doctrines of *Quakerism* which are *Pernicious* to *Human Society*, are these,

(1.) The denying the *lawfulness* of an *Oath*, even in Courts of *Judicature*: An Oath being the highest Assurance one Man can give another of his Veracity; and the Cases in which an Oath is demanded, being such, wherein the highest Assurance is reasonable, because the Estate and Lives of Men are in Question. But this Doctrine of *Quakerism* destroys this Security, under pretence that every *Oath* is a gross Sin.

(2.) The denying outward *Respect* of Persons (such as putting off the *Hat* in the presence of Superiors, as among us) weakens the Reverence that the greater part of Men ought to have towards those in *Authority*, which Reverence cannot (according to the Opinion of all

all Nations) otherwiſe be preſerved in the *Vulgar*, than by viſible Marks of Diſtinction and Diſtance. But, ſuch *Formalities* requiſite to Government, the Quakers deny, under pretence that 'tis their neceſſary Duty ſo to do; and that *they* have received a greater Honour from God than this which their Superiors require from them.

(3.) The denying the Lawfulneſs of *Fighting* (or the uſe of the *Carnal Weapon*) for Private or Publick neceſſary *Defence*, is a Doctrine which (ſo far as it is received) weakens a Nation, and renders the *Protection* of Right, impoſſible, againſt thoſe who ſhall by open War, or private Violence, invade it. And did not the *Quakers* receive *Protection* through the Labours, and Sufferings, and *Blood* of others, they would ſoon be made ſenſible (when too late) of the *pernicious* Nature of this Error.

Theſe Doctrines of the *Quakers* are *Pernicious* to *Human Society*; and therefore ought not to be received, or encouraged by any who love their Rights, their Liberty, and their Country.

2. Beſides theſe, there are other Errors *pernicious* to the *Chriſtian Religion*; and they are ſuch as theſe:

(1.) The denying the uſe of the Two *Sacraments*, *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*, by which Chriſtians are diſtinguiſhed from Infidels, and obliged to live according to the Holy Laws of their Religion. The *Son of God* judg'd it expedient to eſtabliſh theſe *Senſible Rites* for Religious Purpoſes, to be uſed by Men who *muſt* live by Senſe; but the *Quakers* deny the Obligation, Uſe, and Benefit of them.

(2.) Another Doctrine *pernicious* to *Chriſtian Religion*, is, the denying and vilifying a *Learned Miniſtry* as unneceſſary and unlawful; whereas it is not poſſible rightly to underſtand the Doctrine of God delivered in the Language of Men, without that *Learning* which is neceſſary to the underſtanding of that Language; and ſuch neceſſary Learning is very *much more* than an unlearned Man (ſuch as *George Fox* was) can be aware of. Add to this (and in Order to the Subverting of a Learned Miniſtry) their forbidding the payment of *Tythes*, as if ſo doing were

were denying of Christ. By this means, they *rob* the Ministers of that maintenance which the Laws of the Land have provided for those who spend their whole time in the Study and Teaching of Religion; calling such *Learned and Godly Ministers of Christ*, by the opprobrious Name of *Hirelings*; though *Christ* himself said, Luke 7. 10. *The Labourer is worthy of his Hire*; and though the Laws of *England* give every Incumbent as good a Title to his Tythes, as any Landlord hath to his Rent, or to his Estate.

(3.) Again, the *Quakers* deny the *Sufficiency* of the *Holy Scriptures*, and pretend that no Man *can* understand them, unless he hath the *same Spirit* by which the Doctrine of the Scriptures was given forth. Nor will they (that I can find) allow any one *to be in that Spirit* which is necessary to the understanding of the Scriptures, who is not a *Quaker*. This is to affirm, That God has so spoken in the *Scriptures*, (which contain his Revelation) as no Man *can* (without a repeated Revelation) understand what he has spoken in them: and that the *Quakers* only have this Privilege. This Doctrine is manifestly *pernicious* to the *Christian Religion*, whereby Arbitrary *Enthusiasm* is set up for the Interpreter of the written Word of God, and Rule of Religion.

And now I appeal to any *Reasonable* Man, whether the Doctrines aforesaid be not *Pernicious* to *Human Society*, and to *Christian Religion*? I appeal to *George Fox's Journal*, whether these be not Doctrines of *Quakerism*?

2*dly*. Besides these *Pernicious* Doctrines, there are others which are *Trifling*; such as these,

(1.) Their making it a kind of Religious Duty, to say *Thou* and *Thee* to a single Person, and pretending it unlawful to say *You* to such an one; which, at worst were but an Impropriety of Speech. But if *Custom* be the only Rule of Language, as certainly 'tis; then is *You* (in Conversation) good and lawful *English* when used to a single Person, or to many; though *Thou* be only the Singular Number, and *Ye* be only the Plural; whereas *You* is both Singular and Plural; but to make Religion of this, is *Trifling*.

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(2.) Again, to adhere Religiouſly to the particular *Engliſh* words, *Yea* and *Nay*, is another weakneſs, when *Yes* and *No* are as good *Engliſh*, and more commonly uſed.

To theſe *Doctrines* which are *Trifling*, we may add, (1.) Their peculiar *Cuſtom* of *Marriages* and *Burials*; their unreaſonable Oppoſition to the Form and Manner of Solemnization of *Marriage*, eſtabliſhed by Law, as a diſtinguiſhing Separation from other Chriſtians, who univerſally (on ſuch occaſions) have the Solemn *Prayers* and *Benediction* of the Miniſters of Chriſt. Their refuſing to *Bury* their *Dead* in any place but by themſelves; as if they would extend the Marks of their Religious Deluſion beyond their Lives.

(2.) Their refuſing to wear *Lace* and *Light Colours*, as undoubted marks of *Pride* in the *World's Children*, (*i. e.* other Chriſtians) and at the ſame time to allow of Flower'd Silks, and richer Velvet, in *Friends*, (i. e. *Quakers*) though of mean Condition: is more truly the part of *Shameleſs Impudence*, than of *Chriſtian Gravity*. And the *Green* Apron is almoſt as ſingular, as the Reaſon I am told has been given from it, *viz.* that *Adam* and *Eve* wore Green Aprons. By theſe *Doctrines* and *Cuſtoms*, the *Quakers* are diſtinguiſhed; and of theſe Doctrines *George Fox* was the Author.

III. The pretended Original of theſe Doctrines *George* ſaid was Divine, and that *God opened* theſe things to him, by the *Word of the Lord that came unto him*; and that *God ſent him* to Teach theſe Doctrines, the *Fundamentals* of which are, That the *Light of Chriſt* is that which every Man ought to be taught by, and that ſo far as Men are not inlightned by this, the *Scripture* is a *dead Letter* unto them. He that can believe ſuch a Man as *George Fox*, (who never had any learned Education, nor had lived long enough for ſuch an Education, when he began to entertain and publiſh theſe Opinions; who by the diſtreſs of *Temptation*, and near approaches to *Deſpair*, wanted the true and free uſe of his Reaſon; and accordingly

ingly diſcours'd more like a *Religious Madman*, than a Prophet or Apoſtle; who had no other Teacher of this Doctrine, but his own diſturbed Imagination (as is evident, by the Folly and Confuſion of all his Diſcourſes); I ſay he, who can believe ſuch a Man as this to be *taught of God*, meerly becauſe he ſays it, one would think, had as little uſe of Reaſon, as *George* had, when he became the *firſt Quaker*. No ſenſible Man can reliſh ſuch Diſcourſes as thoſe of *George Fox*, (in which he uſes the Holy Scriptures as a *Phraſe Book*; and (in a Senſe never deſign'd by thoſe Words, delivers his own Doctrines) unleſs he lays aſide the uſe of *Reaſon* in Matters of *Religion*; without the uſe of which, 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be any ſuch thing as Religion among Men. But this may be excuſed in a *Quaker*, whoſe *Religion* indeed is but the *Spectre* of Religion murdered by *Ignorance* and *Enthuſiaſm*.

I confeſs I have ſo much regard to Senſe and *Reaſon* and ſo honourable a perſuaſion of *God* and his *Wiſdom*, that there is no Proof ſufficient to convince me, that God ſpake by *ſuch* a man as this. But,

IV. There is *Proof* which he pretends to, and that no leſs than (1.) Voices; and (2.) Viſions; and (3.) Propheſy; and (4.) Miracles; and (5.) Diſcerning of Spirits; and (6.) The knowledge of Nature, and the whole Creation; and (7.) Being in the ſame State that *Adam* was before the Fall; which are more than ever any Prophet or Apoſtle attained to.

To which add (for a colour) firſt; the *Sufferings* of *George Fox*, which I confeſs were very great, (as he ſays) but they manifeſt nothing, excepting the obſtinate *Folly*, and inſolent *Provocation* of him that ſuffered; and ſometimes the *Vices* and *Paſſions* of thoſe by whom he ſuffered. (2.) The *Judgments*, which he ſays, befel the Enemies of him and his Doctrine. Some of theſe Pretences prove nothing; and others of them need be proved themſelves.

And now I deſire (if any *doubt* the truth of what I have ſaid) that they would read *George Fox* his *Journal*

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as I have done, and ſee if what I affirm of him, and his Doctrine, be not found there. I think no man can *Expoſe* this Sect ſo much as *George Fox* his *Journal* expoſeth it: And therefore, becauſe I believe *Quakeriſm* to be a *dangerous and wicked Impoſture*, I deſire men would read the Hiſtory of its *Author*. And let not any who call themſelves *Friends*, count me their *Enemy*, for really I am not ſuch, but do heartily pity them as *Religious Madmen*; and never did them any harm, and am reſolved I never will.

I would *expoſtulate* with *Them*, out of compaſſion to their Souls, but that they ſeem ſo deſperately *conceited* and *prejudiced*, that it muſt be in vain. *God* grant them the *true Light* of Religious Knowledge, and Wiſdom, that they may ſee the error of their way, and be converted to the acknowledgment of the Truth as it is in Jeſus.

And as for Thoſe who are not yet of this Perſuaſion, but think *favourably* of it; I exhort them, in the fear of God, (1.) Never to part with the *Uſe of their Reaſon* in the *ſtudy of Religion*, where there is the beſt Exerciſe, and the greateſt Need of it. And (2.) never to think, that what *God* has *Reveal'd* (or made known) in, and by the *Scriptures of Truth*, cannot be underſtood (or cannot be known) without a *repeated* Revelation (*i. e.* unleſs it be made known again.) We are ſure there is no ſuch Revelation *now*, and that all pretences to it (ſuch as *George Fox* made) are *Impoſture*. The good God deliver his Church from *this*, and from all other *Impoſtures*, and make men throughly *ſenſible*, that to aſcribe their *own* wild and fooliſh *Imaginations* to the *Spirit of God*, has in it the Nature of *Blaſphemy*.

I am

Your Friend and Servant.

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THE TRUE *NATURE* AND Pernicious *Conſequences* OF *Canting* about *RELIGION.*

TRUE *Religion* is Obedience to the Law of God according to ſuch *Meaſures*, and upon ſuch *Principles* as God has by Nature and Revelation made known unto Men. And as the Doctrine of true Religion is perfectly agreeable to the *Reaſon of Things* (to the Nature of God and Men) ſo the Diſcourſes about Religion, which are moſt Rational, are moſt Religious. But there is a ſort of Diſcourſe about Religion, which has nothing of Reaſon, and very little of *Senſe* it, by which the Inſtitution of Religion is diſparaged, and the Deſign of it is ſubverted, and this is that which we call *Enthuſiaſtick Cant.*

I. My intention is to diſcover the true *Nature.*

II. The Pernicious *Conſequences* of this *Canting about Religion.*

I. The true *Nature* of *Canting* about Religion may be underſtood thus: All that is repreſented in the Holy Scriptures (the Record of true Religion) as Said or Done by God, or by any other, with his Approbation, is either for the promoting of *Vertue and Holineſs*, or for the reformation of *Sin and Vice*. That which is Said or Done for this purpoſe, is of great *extent* and compaſs, and not only the Things, but the *Forms of Speech* concerning them are next to innumerable.

Now that Man who makes a rational and wiſe Diſcourſe about Religion, according to the *Scriptures*, muſt explain the Nature of each *Sin*, or *Duty*, and muſt expain the Force of each *Conſideration* and *Argument* which is made uſe of, to perſuade Men to Vertue and Holineſs, and to diſuade them from Vice and Wickedneſs. And the variety of *Forms of Speech*, uſed in the Bible, will afford large Matter for *Illuſtration* in theſe Diſcourſes.

But, thoſe who pretend to *Enthuſiaſm*, and make uſe of *Cant* in Religion, do put ſome *other Subject*, in the room of Vertue and Holineſs, of Vice and Sin; and then enlarge themſelves, in the Application, and Accommodation of what is in Scripture, to that *new Subject*: and that *Subject of Cant* is a pretended *ſomething* of which the Diſcourſer has no Notion at all, or at leaſt, no Notion that is clear and diſtinct.

This *Enthuſiaſm* and *Canting* about Religion, is not peculiar to our *Age* and *Nation*, but have been too common in other Places and Times; ſo that we may diſtinguiſh,

1*ſt*, The *Ancient*: And,

2*dly*, The *Modern Cant and Enthuſiaſm*.

1*ſt*, The *Ancient Cant*, we have a remarkable Example of in the Account, which *Irænæus* gives of the *Valentinian* Hereticks, and their thirty *Æcones*: who alſo informs us concerning the *Art* as well the *Subject* of their *Cant*, Lib. 1. cap. 1. He tells us, They applied

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the Parables of our Saviour, the Diſcourſes of the Prophets, and the Sayings of the Apoſtles to quite *other Purpoſes*, than they who firſt uſed, ever intended them; and this thoſe *Hereticks* did, by changing and tranſpoſing the Paſſages of Scripture, till the words bore the ſenſe they impoſed upon them.

This *Irenæus* compares to the practice of One, who ſhould diſſolve the comely *Picture of a King*, made in *Bugle-work*, and out of the ſame Strings of Bugles, ſhould frame the *Picture* of an ill-favour'd *Dog* or *Fox*; and, after *ſuch* a Change, ſhould pretend *this new Shape* is the *original Picture of the King* which the Artiſt made; and ſhould impoſe that Belief upon the Ignorant and Fooliſh. After the ſame manner did the *Valentinians* deliver their Fables, and Errors, in the Words, and Phraſes, and Parables of Scripture.

This *Artifice* (as he again ſays, *p.* 36.) is like theirs, who ſhould take *any Subject* that occurs, and deſcribe it, in Verſes borrowed out of *Homer*; and ſhould pretend that this is part of a *Poem* of *his*: as he gives Example in one, who repreſented *Hercules* as ſent by *Euriptheus* unto *Cerberus*, in ſuch Verſes as he there ſets down, out of the *Iliads* and *Odyſſes*.

We have a fuller Inſtance of this in *Alexander Roſs* his *Virgilius Evangelizans*: or, *The Hiſtory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, deſcribed in the Words and Verſes of* Virgil. By the ſame kind of Application, that *Roſs* made *Virgil* an *Evangeliſt*; *G. Fox*, and others, have made Saint *Paul* and the reſt of the Writers of the N. T. *Quakers*. And, by the ſame Art, *any* one *Author* may be made to deliver the Doctrine of *another*: *Ariſtotle*'s Philoſophy may be taught in the Words of *Moſes*; and the Religion of the *Jews* may be repreſented in the words of *Ariſtotle*.

But this is ſo groſs and notorious an Abuſe of Scripture, as no ſerious Chriſtian can judg excuſable, or tolerable. Such was the *ancient Enthuſiaſm*, and *Cant* of the *Valentinians*, and other *Hereticks*. There is alſo,

2*dly*,

2dly, The *Modern Enthuſiaſm* and *Cant*, which is either,

1. *Popiſh*: Or,

2. *Proteſtant*.

1. The *Popiſh Cant* is found among their *Myſtical Divines*; for which they have pretended Revelation, and upon which they have founded ſeveral of their Orders, *v. Biſhop* Stillingfleet's *Fanaticiſm of the* Roman *Church*, chap. 4.

Some of theſe *Enthuſiaſms*, and *Cantings*, have been thought *Inconſiſtent* with, and dangerous to the Intereſt and Superſtition of the Church of *Rome*; and the Authors of them have been condemned, if not alſo perſecuted; as *Molino* and the *A-Biſhop of* Cambray, of late. Others have been judged *conſiſtent* with, and uſeful to the Deſigns and Pretences of the Church of *Rome*, and they have been allowed and encouraged as *Sales*, and *Thomas à Kempis*, and Others.

If theſe *Enthuſiaſts* ſet up their *Enthuſiaſm*, and *Cant*, in the ſtead of eſtabliſhed Religion, or in Prejudice to it, they muſt by *ſuppreſſed*; but if they ſet it up in conjunction with *Popery*, and ſubſervient to it, they may be permitted.

What is *Enthuſiaſm* in Notion is *Cant* in Diſcourſe; and ſome are *Univerſal*; and others, only *Partial* in theſe. Thoſe who are *Univerſal* in their *Enthuſiaſm* and *Cant* (as *Molino*, and *Cambray* ſeem enclined to be) muſt be judged dangerous, if not fatal to *Superſtition*, as being entirely in the *contrary Extream*. But, thoſe who have only a *Mixture* of *Enthuſiaſm* and *Cant*, (as *Sales* and *Thomas à Kempis*) may be thought friendly to Superſtition, as having *united* the *Extreams*.

2. The *Proteſtant Enthuſiaſm* and *Cant* among *Us*, is either that,

(1.) Of the *Schiſmaticks*, who ſeparate from the Church of *England*: Or,

(2.) Of ſome *particular Perſons*, who continue in the Communion of it.

(1.)

(1.) The *Enthuſiaſm* and *Cant* of *Schiſmaticks* is divers; and may be thus diſtinguiſhed:

1. There are ſome, who make the *Subject* of their *Cant*, ſo extreamly looſe and general, as not to fix, or explain their *Terms*; and of this ſort, are the Diſcourſes of *Chriſtopher Cob* of *Ely*, of which I ſhall give you this *Specimen*: (*p.* 350. on *Matt.* 26. 42.) "He ſubmits "to be betrayed into the hands of Sinners. 1*ſt*, They "are a *Multitude* into whoſe hands He is betrayed: "this Flatterer and ſmooth-mouth'd Betrayer; this "*Judas* that comes with a Kiſs, and ſalutes, *Hail Ma-*"*ſter*, a great Multitude is at his Heels, He brings a "whole Troop after him. O that you could Read the "Thing in your ſelves, in the Work upon your own "Souls; for there is all this to be fulfilled, if you go "in the ſame way with Chriſt, and tread in His Steps "— And now this you ſhall find true, that where-"ever this *Judas*, that betrays the Soul, gets in, when, "by his Counſel, or Wiſdom, or Flatterings, and fair "Promiſes, that curſed Betrayer gets in his Foot, and "deceives the Soul with a Kiſs, then he lets in a "multitude of Enemies againſt us; then comes in the "*ſwarmings* of Wickedneſs, *They compaſſed me about* "*like Bees* (ſays *David*;) then comes in all the floods "of Ungodlineſs, and makes the Soul afraid; then all "the Foundations of the great Deep are broken up, "and come with violence, ready to ſweep away all "before them: then the *Sea* brings forth abundantly "all manner of creeping things, then a *Night* pre-"ſently overtakes the Soul, and all the *Beaſts* of the "Foreſt creep forth, ſtrange Monſters and things we "never ſaw before, Mire and Dirt and ſtrange Wick-"edneſs appear. —— This *Cob*, and thoſe Men which adhered to him, ſeem to aim at nothing, but ſuch a kind of *Serioufneſs* and *Strictneſs*, as they were diſtinguiſhed by, without adding any peculiar Opinion of their own, and almoſt, without minding any particular Opinion concerning any Doctrine of *Chriſtianity*.

2. Others

2. Others seem to make the *Subject* of their *Cant* certain, and determinate, by their Words; tho' those Words are *not understood*, and cannot be *explain'd* by them; nor do they attempt (at least in their publick Preachments) to explain them, but they keep the *particular Subject* (such as 'tis) in their Thoughts, and *enthusiastically* expect Direction, in their Discourses about Religion, immediately from *GOD*. Thus 'tis, *First*, with the *Quakers*, who make the *Subject* of their *Cant* to be the *Light within them*; *Christ in them*; *Christ come in the Spirit*, &c, but they neither do, nor can explain what they Mean, by *Christ*, and the *Light in them*, in particular; but mean only, in general, *immediate Revelation* from God. And these *Quakers* apply, and accommodate all the *Good* that is said in Scripture to this *Light within them*, and all the *Ill* that is said, to the contrary *Darkness*.

To this also they add, Some *Pernicious*, and other *Foolish* Doctrines, by which they are distinguished from other Men, *v. G. Fox*'s Journal, and *W. Penn*'s Journal. An *Example* of their *Cant* follows: " O ye high Ones " which spread yourselves, appear fair, tall and strong, " you know not God, nor yourselves to be Oaks: O " ye tall Cedars, ye know not yourselves to be so: the " Lord is sent, to look for Fruit in his Vineyard, a- " mong you: it is full of wild Olives, and your wild " Grapes, that many are drunk with the Juice of the " wild Grapes; and so the Vineyard is full of Briars " and Thorns, that the Lambs and Sheep cannot " pass; but they are entangled among the Briars and " Thorns; and the Land is as a Wilderness, that part " full of Serpents, and the Earth is overgrown with " Weeds and Nettles, that there is no feeding for the " Lambs, till the Earth be dressed and overturned —. *The Viols of the Wrath of God by him who is called*, G. Fox, (1655) *p.* 3.

" The Word of the Lord to all the fruitless Trees, " ye dry Trees, ye Oaks, ye tall Cedars, ye fat Bulls

of

" of *Baſan*, ye Thorns, ye Briars, ye wild Aſſes, " which ſnuff up your Noſes in the top of the Moun- " tains, and the Forreſts; ye High-way-ground, ye " Stony-ground, ye Goats, ye Wolves, ye Dogs, ye " Swine, ye Serpents, ye Vulterous Ones, ye Beaſts, " ye Lyons, ye ſtrong Horſes, neighing up and down, " walking after your Luſts: *This* is not Railing, this " is the Scripture Language, own your Names, every " one, in their place; with the Light ye are all ſeen, " and your Names come to be known, ſo every one " bears your Name, according to theſe Natures; ye " are them that cumber the Ground, ye are them that " are not of the Light, ye are them that are to be " condemned with the Light, ye that are Unjuſt, ye " cumber the Ground, *p.* 9. *Viols*, &c.

When the *Oath* of *Abjuration* was impoſed, there was a *Declaration* put out *againſt Popery, and all Popiſh Points*; *by* 10 *Quakers*, *G. Fox*, *Francis Howgill*, *Edw. Burrows*, &c. In which are theſe Words, " And if " you do Love the Light, which comes from Chriſt, " it will lead you to the Church, which is in God, " 1 *Theſ.* 1. 1. and bring you to teſtifie againſt the " World, that the Works thereof are Evil, and will " let you ſee, that the whole World lies in Wicked- " neſs; and will let you ſee that the Scriptures, which " were declared from the Light, and Life, they that " was in it, was in Unity, and all the Sects that are " amongſt them, that have the good Words, and " lives in their Meanings and Thinkings; and Strife, " Contention, Perſecution, and be ſuch that hate the " Light, whoſe Deeds be Evil; which Chriſt teſtifi- " ed againſt, which be Strangers from the Life of God " and Chriſt Jeſus, the Covenant of Promiſe; and ſo " all ſuch as are with the Light Comprehended, Seen, " Fathomed, Judged and Condemned.

At the end of which *Declaration* there are ſeveral *Queſtions*, to all the *Prieſts* in *England*, &c. The 31ſt *Queſtion* is, " Whether all that a Man ſees viſibly,

" with a natural Eye, is not Natural, in the natura
" Knowledge; and whether in this State, the Religi-
" on which is not pure, doth ſtand the Wiſdom and
" Knowledge, which differs not from the Beaſts of the
" Field? *Yea or Nay?*

(2.) There have been thoſe who have made another *Subject* of *Cant*, which They call, *The Firſt* and *ſecond Life*: Meaning by the former, That *Something*, which is *Bad*; and *to be* turned from: And by the *latter*, That *Something* which is *Good*, and to be turned to: And have made a like Uſe, and a like Interpretation of Scripture, as the *Quakers* do, and have expounded the Precepts of *Moral Duties* ſo, as to run them into unintelligible Obſcurity, by the *Subject* of their *Cant*; particularly I remember, That the Duty of the *Wife* towards the *Husband* is repreſented as the Submiſſion of the *Firſt Life* unto the *Second*.

Theſe, and ſuch like Sorts of *Proteſtant Cant*, there are among thoſe, who *Seperate* from the *Church* of *England*.

2. Of thoſe that abide in the *Communion* of the *Church*, there are here and there *ſome* Perſons who affect *Enthuſiaſm* and *Canting* (at leaſt in certain Particulars) tho there be no Proviſion made of ſuch *Stuff*, nor the leaſt Countenance given to it, by the *Church* it ſelf, or the Learned and Godly *Miniſters* thereof: But theſe Perſons are forced to Accommodate themſelves from the *Romaniſts*, or from the *Diſſenters*, according as they encline. Such is the *Nature* of *Canting about Religion*, in Scripture Phraſe, and the Doctrin is ſo far from being the *Wiſdom of God*, that 'tis the *Folly of Men*. The *Enthuſiaſt* diveſts the Expreſſions of *Scripture*, of their original Senſe; and put none upon them that is either Rational or Intelligible. He gives ſeveral *Turns* to a *Notion ſuppoſed*; but not explained, or underſtood; and mixes his own *Paſſions*, with thoſe *Turns* of Speech; but there is *no* wiſe *Inſtruction* which the Diſcourſe affords; the effect of it being only *Sacred*

Amuſe-

Amuſement and Horror. This effect meer *Darkneſs* and *Noiſe* will produce, when nothing elſe is ſeen or known. This *Canting* therefore, is Diſcourſe without the benefit of Diſcourſe; which ſhould convey Knowledge from one Man to another.

Any Man (as it pleaſes him) may ſet up a *New Subject* of *Cant*, and may proceed in it, as theſe *Enthuſiaſts* have done; either with *groſs Ignorance*, as *G. Fox*; or with *artificial Deſign*, as *W. Penn* has done, which is manifeſt by their *Journals*. For inſtance, he may take for the *Subject* of his *Cant*; either *Enmity* and *Reconciliation*, or *the Old* and the *New Creature*, or *Defilement* and *Purification*, or *Death* and *Reſurrection*, or *Sleeping* and *Waking*, or *Fleſh* and *Spirit*. Let us take *Death* and *Reſurrection*, and make that the *Subject* of the *Cant* following. 'I am ſent by the *Spirit of Life* 'to ſpeak unto the *Dead*; with ſuch Dead, I muſt 'Live; to ſuch Dead, I muſt Preach Life; for the 'Dead muſt Live, and from me, Life muſt go forth, 'to Quicken thoſe that have no Life, but are Dead. 'Hear the Voice of Life, O ye Dead, O ye dry Bones, 'O ye Graves! Breath ye Winds, Blow, blow Life 'into the dead Bones, that they may live, and hear 'the Voice of Life. How few are there in theſe dead 'Times that are alive? How is the whole Earth, eve-'ry Nation, every Town, every Houſe a Sepulchre, 'a Charnel-houſe, a Grave full of Bones, Rottenneſs, 'of Filthineſs, of Stench! Wo, wo unto the World, 'becauſe of Death. Stir up your ſelves, ye that are 'Alive (unleſs ye be Dead) cry aloud, ſpeak out, (in 'the name of Life) Command the Dead to Live; pi-'ty the Duſt of Death, break open the Doors of the 'Grave, ſay, *Come forth, come forth ye Dead.* Time 'was, when thou wert Dead, when thou wert Duſt, 'when thou wert Aſhes, when thou wert Buried, laid 'in Darkneſs; thy Head laid full low, trod upon, 'forgotten; but ſome one that had Life, was ſent 'by the Spirit of Life, to bid Thee *Live*, and never

'left calling upon thee, Crying, Weeping, Groaning over thee, till thy Life returned, thy Eyes were 'opened, thy Fetters were broken; thou didſt ſtand 'upon thy Feet, and walk, and leap and cry out, 'and join thy ſelf unto the Living: Be thou a Quickner to Others, mourn over thoſe that are in the ſame 'Condition, that thou waſt in: Frequent the Spiritual Church-yards; lift up thy Lamentation over the 'Graves; let the Dead hear thy Voice, and Live.

I think this *Cant* is *Childiſh* and *Silly enough*, but if any one thinks otherwiſe, 'tis not hard to make what may be more *agreable*. Hitherto we have ſeen the true *Nature* of *Canting about Religion*. I am,

II. To ſhew the *pernicious Conſeqences* of ſuch Talking about Religion, where the *Notion* is *Enthuſiaſm*, and the *Diſcourſe* is *Cant*: And, the *pernicious Conſequences*, are,

1ſt, That it *Subverts the Credit* of Religion among thoſe who *do not* reliſh that *Cant*: And,

2dly, It *hinders* the *Efficacy* of Religion, among thoſe who do reliſh it.

1ſt, This *Enthuſiaſtick Canting about Religion* ſubverts the *Credit* of it among thoſe who do *not reliſh* ſuch *Canting*. For,

1. It expoſes Religion to the *Scorn* of thoſe who are *Atheiſtical* and *Profane*: And,

2. It *diſparages* Religion, in the Opinion of thoſe, who are *Rational* and *Judicious*.

1. This *Enthuſiaſtick Canting* about Religion, *expoſes* it to the *Scorn* of thoſe, who are *Atheiſtical* and *Prophane*. Every one that has the uſe of Reaſon, and tolerable Sagacity, ſees plainly, that this *Canting* is *childiſh and ſilly*, and to repreſent Religion, in that manner, (and in *that manner only*, or *chiefly*, as *moſt Religious*) is in effect to *Burleſq* it. There is nothing ſo ridiculous as *Folly* and *Cant* repreſents Religion under the moſt fool-

fooliſh Appearance. So that, when the *Irreligious* find Religion tendred to them, under that contemptible *Character*, they think there is juſt matter of *Scorn*, in that Repreſentation; and will fix that *Reproach* upon Religion itſelf, which is due only this *Miſrepreſentation* of it. The *Canting* Diſcourſer juſtifies the Laughing at *his* Diſcourſes; and no Wiſe Man can condemn the *Ridiculing* that which is *Ridiculous*. This gives advantage to the *Atheiſtical* and *Profane*, who will Deride the *Wiſdom* of Religion when 'tis diſguiſed under the *Folly* of *Enthuſiaſm and Cant*. So that the Religion of Chriſt is *Blaſphemed* by, the *Infidel* and *Irreligious*, thro' the Extravagancies of thoſe that affect a *Sacred Cant* in their Diſcourſes about Religion.

2. *Enthuſiaſtick Canting* about Religion *diſparages* it, in the account of thoſe, that are *Rational* and *Judicious*. The *Enthuſiaſt* makes a dark and blind Repreſentation of Religion, ſo that, no Man can, *by his* Diſcourſes, tell *what it is:* and thoſe, who have not wiſer Repreſentations of *Religion* from others; muſt need be *tempted*, to think that Religon is *nothing*, or at leaſt nothing but *Cant and Enthuſiaſm*; which are as much *nothing* as can be. *They* attempt, to expreſs in Words, a thing of which they have *no Notion*; and therefore, thoſe Words can have no other Appearance, then that of *Non-ſence:* But no ſenſible Man can have any *eſteem* of ſuch a Diſcourſe, (as is *without Senſe*) becauſe it is called *Religious*; and therefore, as *Canting about Religion does expoſe* it to the *Scorn* of thoſe who are *Atheiſtical* and *Profane*, ſo it *ſinks* the *Reputation* of it among thoſe that are *Rational* and *Judicious*. Thus it is with thoſe that do not reliſh *Cant* and *Enthuſiaſm*.

2*dly*, This *Canting about Religion* does *hinder* the *Efficacy* of it, among thoſe who do *reliſh* ſuch *Cant:* For, as the true Improvement of Men from Religion *Wiſdom* and *Holineſs*; ſo this *Canting about Religion* is a *hindrance* to both.

1. *Cant-*

1. *Canting about Religion* is a *hindrance* to Men in Religious *Wiſdom* and *Knowledge*. This is plain from the *Nature* of *Cant*, before explain'd; and therefore, what Pretences ſoever ſuch *Enthuſiaſts* make *to Light*, 'tis plain, to every one, that they *are in Darkneſs*: And, that they *put Darkneſs for Light, and Light for Darkneſs*. Yet, *Firſt*, ſuch Diſcourſes as they make are very *eaſily underſtood*. And, *Secondly*, any Man of Underſtanding, can very *eaſily make* ſuch Diſcourſes, as theirs.

(1.) Tho' there be no Wiſdom or Knowledg contain'd in ſuch *Enthuſiaſtick Canting*, yet are thoſe Diſcourſes very *eaſily underſtood*; for this plain Reaſon, becauſe there is *Nothing in them*, to be Learned. There is nothing in ſuch Diſcourſes but *Affection* and *Phraſes*: Thoſe *Phraſes* ſoon become *Familiar*, and that *Affection* is manifeſt of itſelf.

Thoſe who teach *Wiſdom* muſt needs offer many things which are not, at firſt, underſtood by the *Learner*: the Learner muſt give cloſe *Attention*, and take great *Pains* to underſtand the Teacher, and cannot perhaps, at the firſt, underſtand him, notwithſtanding all his Pains. But where there is *no Inſtruction* (and the *Canting* Diſcourſes contain none) there, a very *ſlight Attention* is ſufficient; and there is *no Difficulty* made to the *Hearer*, which, (together with the *Pathos*, expreſſed in *Scripture-phraſe*) recommends theſe Diſcourſes, to too many.

(2.) As every Man can *eaſily underſtand* all that is to be underſtood in ſuch *Canting* Diſcourſes; ſo any Man of Parts and Confidence can *eaſily learn to make* thoſe Diſcourſes. For, there is no more neceſſary, than to make *Scripture Phraſes familiar*, (by very *much reading* the Bible, and very *little underſtanding* it) and then, to expreſs, as *violent Affections* as may be, in *Elocution* and *Pronunciation*, and *the Buſineſs is done*. Thoſe Ignorant People, who have not yet attempted this, do greatly *Admire* it, in the unlearned Speaker, and think that He

He muſt needs be *Taught of God*, becauſe he was *never* Taught at all. And, when they, can ſpeak themſelves, they have the ſame Opinion of their *own* Performances, and Abilities, as they had of *his*.

Thus does *empty Diſcourſe*, paſs for the Inſtruction of *Religious Wiſdom:* tho' no Man can be the more knowing, for his learning Religion: Thus,

2. This *Canting about Religion* does *hinder* the *Efficacy* of it on Men, as to *Righteouſneſs and Holineſs*. For this *Gift* (if it be one) of *Canting*, and even the *Reliſh* of *Canting*, makes Men exceedingly *Proud:* and *Pride* is the Fundamental and Radical Sin; in which, all thoſe Sins, which are *Spiritual and Diabolical* are comprehended. *Pride is a magnifying* of Ourſelves and a *villifying* of Others; and all ſorts of *Malice* are ſubſervient to *Pride*. The *Diſcourſes* of the *Enthuſiaſt*, are *Cant* and *Folly*, and the *Defence* of thoſe Diſcourſes is *Reviling*, *Railing*, and *Curſing*. There are none that do *more Deſpiſe* thoſe who differ *from* them: or, *more Malign* thoſe who oppoſe them; then the *Enthuſiaſts* do, which is a certain ſign that *Chriſtianity* has no power over them. *Vide* W. P. *Guide miſtaken*, p. 40. and p. 18.

'Tis poſſible, that thoſe who are guilty of the *Spiritual and Diabolical* Sins, of *Pride* and *Malice*; may not be equally guilty of the *beaſtly Sins* of *Drunkenneſs and Uncleanneſs:* But no judicious *Chriſtian* thinks the former leſs abominable, though they are not generally *ſo ill thought on* as the latter are.

Theſe are the *Pernicious Conſequences of Canting about Religion*, that it *Subverts* the *Credit* of it, among thoſe who *do not reliſh Cant*; and it *Hinders the Efficacy* of Religion, among thoſe who *do reliſh it*.

To

To *Conclude*: Let a *wiſe Love of Religion*, Teach Men a *juſt Abhorrence* of *Enthuſiaſtical Canting* about it: And, *Whereſoever* we find Diſcourſes that have nothing in them, but *vehement Affections* and *empty Phraſes* (though taken out of the *Scripture*) *know*, that *This* is the *Canting about Religion*, to be abhorred, for its vicious *Nature*, and intollerable *Conſequences:*

F I N I S.